



USDA AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FORUM STUDENT DIVERSITY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION



Would you like to attend USDA's 85th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum next February in Washington, D.C.?

USDA's Agricultural Outlook Forum provides producers, policymakers, business leaders, and government and industry analysts with a unique opportunity to meet, exchange ideas, and discuss timely issues at the forefront of America's agriculture. In an effort to increase the present and future diversity of participation in the Forum, USDA created a program that provides sponsorship opportunities for junior and senior baccalaureate students to attend this annual 2-day event.

The 2009 Agricultural Outlook Forum will be held February 26-27, 2009, in Arlington, Virginia, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel. USDA's World Agricultural Outlook Board and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) will host an introductory briefing featuring agencies participating in the Forum and a discussion of USDA internships and career opportunities. The USDA Outlook Forum Diversity Program benefits all parties involved and promotes diverse participation that educates baccalaureate students about agribusiness, the latest research, future trends, and policy in contemporary agriculture.

TARGET: The program targets between 10-18 agriculture, agricultural economics, agricultural communications, agricultural business, or pre-veterinary junior or senior undergraduate students. Students will come from Land-Grant Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

SELECTION CRITERIA: Each institution will submit a letter of recommendation for up to two students along with the student's one-page essay titled "Agriculture as a Career." Each institution performs a "pre-selection" process by choosing the two best essays among the applicants for final consideration. Students should submit their essays to their respective institution representative (i.e., academic dean/department chair). Institutions must submit their two best essays and recommendations to CSREES by November 7, 2008, to: amclaren@csrees.usda.gov and hbahn@csrees.usda.gov. All essays must include student's name, address, phone number, and e-mail. A CSREES panel will provide an initial review. Final selections will be made by Dr. Ahmad Jilani, USDA Liaison Officer, University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES). Two positions are reserved for UMES students.

TRAVEL ITINERARY: Registration, transportation, lodging, and Forum meals are provided for the students. If a student's school is located within a convenient driving distance to DC (4 hours or less), a government mileage rate and hotel parking are reimbursed, or these students may elect to take the bus or train. Students will arrive in Washington, D.C., February 25, 2009, and return home February 27, 2009.

Past Private-sector Sponsorship Includes: CHS Foundation, Deere & Company, Farm Credit Bank of Texas, and Tyson Foods.

ESSAY SUBMISSION DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 7, 2008

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please visit: www.usda.gov/oce/forum or contact Brenda Chapin, Forum Coordinator, at 202-720-5447 or bchapin@oce.usda.gov

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